

STATE OF MARYLAND



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December 13, 2000

Ms. Magalie Roman Salas
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

ORIGINAL

Re: Ex parte Filing in CC Docket No. 96-45
(Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service)

Dear Ms. Salas:

Enclosed for inclusion in the public record in this proceeding, please find two (2) copies of a letter with exhibits from the National Association of State Utility Consumer Advocates (NASUCA) in the above-referenced docket.

Should you have any questions related to this filing, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michael J. Travieso".
Michael J. Travieso
People's Counsel

MJT:sd

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Re: Ex parte Filing in
CC Docket No. 96-45 (Federal-State Joint Board on
Universal Service) and
FCC-00J-3 (Rural Task Force)

Dear Ms. Salas:

The National Association of State Utility Consumer Advocates (NASUCA) has recently adopted a resolution which calls upon the FCC to reconsider its eligibility criteria under federal regulations for enrollment in Lifeline and Linkup programs. (See attached). This resolution calls upon the FCC to amend its regulations in order to allow consumers to enroll in Lifeline and Linkup programs based on their income, even if they are not enrolled in any public assistance programs. Currently, under federal regulation, only those who participate in Medicaid, food stamps, Supplementary Security Income, federal public housing assistance or Section 8, or low-income home energy assistance programs, are eligible to receive Lifeline and Linkup benefits.

Ms. Magalie Roman Salas
December 13, 2000
Page 2

NASUCA believes that these regulations are inconsistent with current efforts to move people from social welfare programs into productive employment. There will be, therefore, and currently are many working poor who ought to be able to benefit, under federal regulations, from Lifeline and Linkup benefits. I have also attached a chart prepared by NASUCA which demonstrates that Lifeline and Linkup programs are extremely underutilized in all 50 states. NASUCA believes that changing the federal eligibility requirements will be a good first step in our effort to increase enrollment.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael J. Travieso". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "M".

Michael J. Travieso
Chair, NASUCA
Telecommunications Committee

MJT:sd

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE UTILITY CONSUMER ADVOCATES

RESOLUTION

**Requesting the FCC to Allow Consumers to Qualify
for Lifeline and Linkup Benefits Based upon Their Low Income Status
under the Federal Regulations**

- WHEREAS, universal service has been accepted as a national goal so that all consumers may enjoy affordable telephone service;
- WHEREAS, Congress enacted the Telecommunications Act of 1996 and ordered that low-income consumers should have access to telecommunications services at rates that are just, reasonable, and affordable;
- WHEREAS, the FCC in 1997 in its Universal Service Order ruled that under the federal regulations a consumer would be eligible for Lifeline and Linkup benefits only if the customer participated in Medicaid, food stamps, Supplementary Security Income (SSI), federal public housing assistance or Section 8, or Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP);
- WHEREAS, the FCC has continued under its Lifeline and Linkup regulations to prohibit consumers from enrolling in the Lifeline or Linkup programs no matter how low their incomes unless the low-income consumers have enrolled in a designated public assistance program;
- WHEREAS, many low-income consumers have not been able to successfully enroll in one of the designated public assistance programs or have chosen not to attempt such enrollment;
- WHEREAS, in 2000 there were 21.8 million households at or below 150% of the federal poverty level, but only 9.9 million received various forms of public assistance;
- WHEREAS, the national policy of welfare reform encourages consumers who are enrolled in public assistance programs to leave such public assistance programs;
- WHEREAS, many consumers that leave public assistance programs continue to have a low income;
- WHEREAS, consumers who are able to leave or avoid public assistance but still have a low income should not be penalized by being disqualified from receiving Lifeline

and Linkup benefits;
WHEREAS, many consumers that are eligible for public assistance choose not to enroll in such programs because of the stigma, inconvenience or difficulty related to such enrollment, and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the FCC should reconsider its eligibility criteria under the federal regulations and allow consumers to enroll in the Lifeline and Linkup programs based upon their income, even if they are not enrolled in any public assistance programs;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Executive Committee of NASUCA is authorized to take all steps consistent with this Resolution in order to secure its implementation.

Approved by NASUCA:

Submitted by:

San Diego, California
Place

NASUCA Telecommunications Committee

November 14, 2000
Date

States	State Abb.	Household Relationship Recoded Householder (Thousands)						Lifeline Recipients 2000 3rd Quarter Filings (USAC)	Lifeline/ 150%	Number of Households that Received Means-Tested Cash or Noncash Assistance excl. School Lunch Only by Income to Poverty Ratios: March 2000 CPS						Number of Households that Received Means-Tested Cash or Noncash Assistance including School Lunch by Income to Poverty Ratios: March 2000 CPS						Number of Households that Received Food Stamps by Income to Poverty Ratios March 2000 CPS					
		Income to Poverty Ratio								Income to Poverty Ratio						Income to Poverty Ratio						Income to Poverty Ratio					
		All	Less than 100%	100% to 124%	125% to 149%	Below 150%	150% and up			No. benefits received	Less than 100%	100% to 124%	125% to 149%	Below 150%	150% and up	No. benefits received	Less than 100%	100% to 124%	125% to 149%	Below 150%	150% and up	No. benefits received	Less than 100%	100% to 124%	125% to 149%	Below 150%	150% and up
US Total STATE		104711	11936	4658	5190	21784	82926	5703	26%	88066	6414	1842	1688	9944	6701	85175	7037	2202	2068	11307	6229	98973	3682	692	472	4846	89
Alabama	AL	1744	277	68	100	445	1299	21	5%	1413	172	28	35	235	95	1350	178	32	45	255	139	1615	95	7	16	118	11
Alaska	AK	218	16	9	8	33	184	6	17%	179	5	5	4	14	25	173	6	5	5	16	28	209	2	2	2	6	3
Arizona	AZ	1808	217	104	94	415	1393	24	6%	1558	74	37	35	146	104	1487	92	51	39	182	140	1723	42	8	7	57	2
Arkansas	AR	1027	160	54	62	276	751	9	3%	814	95	21	26	142	70	773	100	24	33	157	97	943	47	8	16	71	14
California	CA	12082	1401	649	608	2658	9424	3182	120%	9967	690	304	234	1228	887	9488	801	361	305	1467	1128	11515	341	103	44	488	78
Colorado	CO	1601	122	41	62	225	1376	27	12%	1454	43	16	13	72	76	1417	50	19	14	83	102	1554	27	8	4	39	9
Connecticut	CT	1287	103	44	53	200	1086	66	33%	1129	47	17	29	93	64	1116	48	20	29	97	73	1235	29	7	8	44	9
Delaware	DE	288	28	10	11	49	240	1	1%	238	17	4	4	25	24	233	18	4	6	28	27	275	9	1	1	11	2
District of Columbia	DC	239	32	9	8	49	190	11	23%	190	19	5	5	29	20	187	19	5	6	30	22	221	13	1	1	15	3
Florida	FL	6064	715	276	342	1333	4731	133	10%	5218	327	78	81	486	360	4988	376	112	118	606	470	5767	187	34	18	239	58
Georgia	GA	2951	353	148	147	648	2303	74	11%	2474	185	36	55	276	201	2357	204	59	69	332	283	2759	126	15	19	160	31
Hawaii	HI	407	45	23	18	86	322	15	17%	340	22	8	4	34	33	328	23	12	6	41	39	371	17	6	2	25	11
Idaho	ID	481	57	21	31	109	372	19	18%	415	25	6	10	41	25	395	28	8	12	48	37	460	12	3	2	17	4
Illinois	IL	4572	441	180	186	787	3786	56	7%	3974	262	68	45	375	223	3892	272	75	56	403	277	4333	170	24	16	210	26
Indiana	IN	2301	170	94	136	400	1901	20	5%	1984	84	20	47	151	167	1945	84	29	58	171	185	2190	55	8	26	89	22
Iowa	IA	1142	85	52	84	221	921	10	4%	1028	45	13	13	71	43	1009	48	15	17	80	53	1101	22	5	6	33	7
Kansas	KS	1045	117	58	38	213	831	7	3%	897	54	21	11	86	61	864	67	24	14	106	77	1000	36	3	0	39	5
Kentucky	KY	1549	201	114	92	407	1142	39	10%	1255	117	44	38	199	95	1225	126	45	44	215	110	1429	71	17	13	101	19
Louisiana	LA	1609	275	80	93	448	1161	15	3%	1274	140	44	20	204	131	1206	159	44	35	238	165	1485	83	15	10	108	15
Maine	ME	497	45	19	32	96	401	74	77%	425	29	6	8	43	29	419	30	7	9	46	32	480	20	4	5	29	8
Maryland	MD	1989	174	46	70	290	1700	4	1%	1762	83	20	24	127	100	1754	87	24	24	135	100	1826	36	10	7	53	8
Massachusetts	MA	2466	270	108	94	472	1995	170	36%	2001	167	54	40	261	203	1970	173	63	40	276	219	2368	68	10	6	84	14
Michigan	MI	3709	367	177	161	705	3004	142	20%	3158	228	71	57	356	194	3068	245	72	65	382	241	3512	124	38	13	175	21
Minnesota	MN	1849	150	82	76	308	1541	55	18%	1603	78	35	23	136	111	1576	89	40	25	154	119	1792	27	8	3	38	16
Mississippi	MS	1040	182	45	97	324	716	16	5%	784	122	19	43	184	70	725	129	28	57	214	101	943	70	7	10	87	5
Missouri	MO	2171	251	73	89	413	1758	17	4%	1825	118	40	41	199	147	1803	137	40	41	218	150	2038	85	18	7	110	22
Montana	MT	357	46	26	22	94	263	10	11%	304	22	7	5	34	19	292	25	10	7	42	23	336	14	4	1	19	2
Nebraska	NE	654	78	28	37	143	511	15	10%	579	30	12	7	49	25	559	38	12	9	59	36	628	16	4	3	23	2
Nevada	NV	682	64	26	32	122	561	16	13%	608	26	8	6	40	33	585	32	14	8	54	43	657	16	2	1	19	4
New Hampshire	NH	465	40	14	14	68	397	6	9%	391	18	9	8	35	38	386	19	9	8	36	42	442	8	4	5	17	6
New Jersey	NJ	3045	262	120	120	502	2543	20	4%	2631	123	36	37	196	217	2592	137	41	42	220	233	2962	57	10	7	74	6
New Mexico	NM	662	119	37	50	206	457	34	16%	536	51	17	18	86	40	494	69	23	21	113	56	608	32	8	5	45	8
New York	NY	7035	960	350	365	1675	5359	608	36%	5510	677	151	168	996	528	5342	703	172	183	1058	635	6470	388	41	47	476	85
North Carolina	NC	2947	387	136	156	679	2268	56	8%	2467	206	66	52	324	156	2393	218	75	71	364	190	2789	86	31	13	130	25
North Dakota	ND	257	31	17	16	64	193	12	18%	222	13	3	5	21	13	214	14	5	6	25	18	244	9	1	1	11	1
Ohio	OH	4521	545	157	171	873	3648	159	18%	3850	338	45	42	425	246	3751	354	61	52	467	302	4231	207	25	7	239	51
Oklahoma	OK	1334	188	63	80	331	1004	4	1%	1109	98	27	16	141	84	1069	100	34	21	155	110	1257	52	11	2	65	13
Oregon	OR	1336	166	49	76	291	1045	30	10%	1116	75	26	25	126	94	1076	90	26	31	147	114	1255	44	8	11	63	18
Pennsylvania	PA	4668	456	217	243	916	3752	47	5%	3964	269	81	55	405	298	3885	279	92	61	432	350	4361	194	46	20	260	25
Rhode Island	RI	387	43	22	19	84	304	48	57%	306	33	15	9	57	25	298	34	16	10	60	28	384	18	3	1	22	2
South Carolina	SC	1544	183	63	100	346	1198	21	6%	1280	99	28	29	156	109	1241	102	31	35	188	134	1437	64	18	6	88	19
South Dakota	SD	282	25	12	16	53	229	12	22%	245	11	6	5	22	16	238	12	7	5	24	20	269	5	3	2	10	4
Tennessee	TN	2134	248	102	111	461	1674	37	8%	1675	178	54	51	283	177	1827	187	60	61	308	200	2000	91	19	11	121	13
Texas	TX	7436	981	350	408	1739	5697	258	15%	6282	484	134	119	737	417	5895	586	181	158	935	808	6961	307	50	49	406	69
Utah	UT	679	43	25	34	102	576	20	19%	603	16	8	5	29	47	577	19	14	10	43	59	666	10	3	1	14	8
Vermont	VT	240	25	10	16	51	189	29	57%	183	16	7	6	29	29	178	16	7	7	30	32	222	10	4	1	15	4
Virginia	VA	2852	257	59	98	414	2238	22	5%	2377	107	9	10	128	150	2346	114	9	14	137	168	2573	64	3	0	67	11
Washington	WA	2302	219	88	79	386	1915	66	17%	1954	110	17															

Note: Means-tested assistance includes: Public Housing, Heating Assistance, Rent Assistance, Medicaid or Medicare, Supplemental Security Income, Hot